

Pradesh in the national as well as public interest.

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA (Pali): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a very important matter. Lakhs of employees belonging to 196 branches of rural banks all over the country are agitating for the last several days and they are staging a dharna. They have also given a notice to go on strike from 31st March. The national tribunal award should be implemented by amalgamation of 196 branches of rural banks into an All India Rural Bank. I have drawn the attention of the hon. Finance Minister also towards this problem and I had requested him to take constructive and creative steps in this regard so that lakhs of employees working in nearly 400 branches of 196 rural banks and who are agitating this time could be benefited. There is much discontent among them and it is an injustice to them.

I, would, therefore, like to request that an All India Rural Bank should be constituted by nationalising all the branches of the rural banks in the country and their service conditions and conditions for customers should be decided. What happens today is that officers of the sponsored Banks come on deputation to these banks; They work as Managers for 3 years in these branches and indulge in corrupt practices and create many scandals there.

So, my submission is that all the branches of Rural Banks should be amalgamated and National Tribunal Award which was accepted after the Supreme Court verdict, should be implemented. It had been agreed to by the former Finance Minister..... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I am again saying that there are 542 Members in the House.

The Members who have already spoken during the Question Hour should not speak under Rule 377 and those who have already spoken under Rule 377 should not speak during Zero Hour, so that everybody gets a chance to speak.

SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV (Shahjahanpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the journalists and press photographers to Uttar Pradesh are in great danger. There are many such instances in which the pressmen have been beaten in collusion with the administration.

Sir, I had myself gone to Kanpur. There was a murderous assault on the life of press-photographer, Abhir Singh Alias Lalla. He was hit by the head and beaten mercilessly. The Government of Uttar Pradesh shed off its responsibility by just sanctioning a meagre amount of Rs. 10,000. Sir, the most shameful thing is that the photographers were attacked only because they had entered the venue of BJP meeting during the course of their President's Ekata Yatra.

MR. SPEAKER: It will get more publicity, if you people go on speaking on this.

SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV: There was a clash between senior journalists and photographers and police and the Senior Superintendent of Police threw a challenge to them. The result was that he engineered an assault on the photographer. The Chief Minister is talking of enquiry only... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. SPEAKER: It is over, please keep quiet now. This matter is being raised again and again. If you will speak more, it would get more publicity.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV:

Sir, the journalists will continue to be insulted in this manner.

[*English*]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Will the Prime Minister assure that the strike by the jute workers.....

MR. SPEAKER: You have agreed to speak one after the other and also if a Member has spoken in Question Hour he will not speak during the Zero Hour.

Yes, Shri Virendra Singh.

[*Translation*]

You had given a very good suggestion. Please speak on it and don't go into other issues.

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will speak only on that. Sir, I had gone to my constituency. There we had discussions on the miserable life led by District level, State level and national level sportsmen. It sent shivers down my spine, when I heard all that.

I would like to draw the attention at the Government towards a basic problem faced by the sportsmen, which is linked to our national honour. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question is related to the condition of our sportsmen and women from rural areas who play at the District, Zonal, Regional and National level, who dedicate the prime of their youth to bring laurels to their districts, States and the country. Unfortunately, the Government doesn't make any provision to provide a livelihood to these people, once they retire from active sports. As a result of this, people living in rural areas are not taking any interest in sports. It is also because, while on the one hand rural sports is being neglected, on the other, the sportsmen from the rural areas lead a

pitiable life at the end of their career. Government servants are paid monthly salary for the service they render to the nation and they are also assured of pension or other pensionary benefits after their superannuation. They are provided these facilities because while in service, they contributed their mite to the nation's prestige.

12.48 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

But Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, why doesn't the Government pay attention to the conditions of the rural sportsmen, who through sheer hard work, dedicate their youth, to the service of the country and add to the glory of the nation? It is precisely because of this that our sports standards are falling, despite allocation of crores of rupees for sports.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am not against the benefits being provided to the Government servants, but I would certainly like to know the remedial steps being taken by the Government to improve the lot of those sportsmen, who devote their prime of life for the country's esteem. I sincerely hope that you will be kind enough to direct the Government to pay attention towards this very important national problem and provide facilities to the sportspersons due to them, at the level they play and also make a provision to provide pension to block level, district level, state level and national level players. Similarly, it seems that the miserable condition of sportspersons in the rural areas. Therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the wide coverage given to urbane games and players should be restricted. I am not saying that I am opposed to cricket or Tennis but the village level sportspersons should be given similar coverage and facilities... (*Interruptions*) ... Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this